

Members

Sen. Thomas Weatherwax, Chairperson  
Sen. Johnny Nugent  
Sen. John Waterman  
Sen. James Lewis  
Sen. Richard Young  
Sen. Larry Lutz  
Rep. Dennie Oxley, Vice-Chairperson  
Rep. James Bottorff  
Rep. Markt Lytle  
Rep. William Friend  
Rep. Jack Lutz  
Rep. Dean Young



## WATER RESOURCES STUDY COMMITTEE

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Authority: IC 2-5-25

### MEETING MINUTES<sup>1</sup>

Meeting Date: August 5, 2003  
Meeting Time: 1:00 P.M.  
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St., Room 130  
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana  
Meeting Number: 1

**Members Present:** Sen. Thomas Weatherwax, Chairperson; Sen. Richard Young; Rep. Dennie Oxley, Vice-Chairperson; Rep. James Bottorff; Rep. Markt Lytle; Rep. William Friend; Rep. Jack Lutz.

**Members Absent:** Sen. Johnny Nugent; Sen. John Waterman; Sen. James Lewis; Sen. Larry Lutz; Rep. Dean Young.

The chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. After providing an overview of the charge to the Committee, the chairperson explained that after discussing the matter with Sen. Bud Meeks, chairperson of the Interim Study Committee on Lake and Water Issues, he wished the members of the Committee to consider whether they want to study water shortage issues, which had been assigned to the Sen. Meeks' committee. Sen. Meeks had indicated that he had no objection to transferring the topic to the Committee. The chairperson then called for a discussion of the Committee's work during past interims.

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<sup>1</sup> Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

The members of the Committee discussed the Committee's work during the previous interim, which focused primarily on drought planning issues and permanent funding sources for Clean Water Indiana. Following the Committee discussion, the chairperson called for public comments.

Jim Hebenstreit, Assistant Director of the Division of Water, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), explained that Indiana's water shortage plan, developed in 1994, lacks specificity concerning the priority of uses of water during a drought. There has been interest in updating the plan for a number of years, and, following a House Resolution calling for DNR to put together a working group to update the plan, DNR has established the working group, which met for the first time that morning. In this working group, a variety of interests, including utilities, environmental groups, business, and agriculture are represented. At the morning meeting, a draft work plan was presented, and comments were taken. The draft plan will be edited, and the working group will meet again in three to four weeks to discuss the revised plan and add timelines for actions. DNR will report the working group's progress to the Committee.

Vince Griffin, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, explained that while the state faced droughts in the 1940's, 1960's, and 1980's, current water usage is much higher and the impact of a drought would be greater. He found the morning meeting of the working group to be very productive, and stated that the working group will add additional members to ensure a broader representation of interests.

Glenn Pratt, Sierra Club, pointed out that the number of people involved with the working group demonstrates the breadth of concern over the issue. He cautioned that the final decisions called for in the plan may involve hard political decisions, and would favor the statutory creation of a water shortage task force to provide definitive answers to conflicting use issues. In addition, he would urge cities to develop local drought plans, passed by ordinance, that establish local priorities of uses. Concerning Clean Water Indiana, he stated that more needs to be done to ensure state funds are available to match and maximize federal funds for agricultural projects.

Mark Thornburg, Indiana Farm Bureau, stated that he had participated in the morning meeting of the working group. He pointed out that conflicting uses for water do not occur only during droughts, and that Indiana does not have a developed system of water rights to resolve conflicts between uses.

Concerning Clean Water Indiana funding, Jim Ray, Soil Conservation Division, DNR, explained that a variety of options have been discussed, including a tax on bottled water, property taxes, and tipping fees. The issue impacts urban as well as rural areas. Mr. Ray agreed to research how other states fund clean water projects.

Mike Neyer, Director, Division of Water, DNR, requested the Committee's permission to present issues concerning dam safety and development and the enforcement of Division of Water statutes at an upcoming meeting. The Committee agreed to hear the presentations.

Following discussion, it was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Committee after the working group had met again. The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.